IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with <u>underlining</u> and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1-4.   (cancelled)

5.   (previously presented) An anonymity setting device comprising:

a specificity calculating unit extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of intensity at which the expression can specify the person; and

an anonymity setting processing unit changing a name of the person in the input document having a specificity which is greater than a predetermined threshold;

wherein said specificity calculating unit extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of specificity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

said anonymity setting processing unit sets, when there is a surrounding expression of a degree of specificity higher than a predetermined threshold, anonymity for such surrounding expression and the person's name; and

wherein the specificity calculating unit further includes:

a syntax analyzing means creating a syntax tree indicative of a modification relationship between clauses based on a syntax analyzing rule from a result of a part-of-speech analysis;

a person specifying tree extracting means extracting a tree structure specifying the person as a person modification expression based on a person specifying tree extracting rule for the tree structure obtained by the parsing unit; and

a tree structure specificity calculating means calculating a specificity of the person specifying tree thus extracted based on statistical information.

6-10.   (cancelled)

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11.   (previously presented) An anonymity setting device comprising:

a specificity calculating unit extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of intensity at which the expression can specify the person; and

an anonymity setting processing unit changing a name of the person in the input document having a specificity which is greater than a predetermined threshold;

wherein said specificity calculating unit extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of specificity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

said anonymity setting processing unit sets, when there is a surrounding expression of a degree of specificity higher than a predetermined threshold, anonymity for such surrounding expression and the person's name; and

wherein the anonymity setting processing unit replaces an expression specifying the person extracted from the input document to a low specificity expression having a specificity which is equal to or smaller than a threshold to be used for rewriting with the anonymity expression.

12-17. (cancelled)

18.   (previously presented) A document anonymity setting method comprising:

a specificity calculating step of extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of specificity at which the expression specifies a name of the person; and

an anonymity setting processing step of rewriting the name of the person with an anonymity expression in said input document which has a specificity higher than a predetermined threshold;

wherein said specificity calculating step extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of intensity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

said anonymity setting processing step sets, when there is a surrounding expressions of a degree of specificity higher then a predetermined threshold, anonymity for said surrounding expression and the person's name; and

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wherein the specificity calculating step further includes:

a syntax analyzing step of creating a syntax tree indicative of a modification relationship between clauses based on a syntax analyzing rule from the result of the part-of-speech analysis;

a tree structure specifying a person extracting step of extracting a tree structure specifying the person as a person modification expression based on a person specifying tree extracting rule for the syntax tree obtained at the syntax analyzing step; and

a tree structure specificity calculating step of calculating a specificity of the tree structure specifying the person thus extracted based on statistical information.

19.   (previously presented) A document anonymity setting method comprising:

a specificity calculating step of extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of specificity at which the expression specifies a name of the person; and

an anonymity setting processing step of rewriting the name of the person with an anonymity expression in said input document which has a specificity higher than a predetermined threshold;

wherein said specificity calculating step extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of intensity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

said anonymity setting processing step sets, when there is a surrounding expressions of a degree of specificity higher then a predetermined threshold, anonymity for said surrounding expression and the person's name; and

wherein the specificity calculating step includes:

a sentence extracting step of extracting a sentence from the input document;

a part-of-speech analyzing step of discriminating the extracted sentence for each part of speech;

a person's name extracting step of extracting the person's name based on a name extracting rule from a result of the part-of-speech analysis; and

a person's name specificity calculating step of calculating a specificity of the person's name thus extracted based on statistical information; and

wherein the specificity calculating step takes a weight average of a specificity obtained by a calculation of an expression which specifies the person extracted from the input document with a specificity registered in a reference specificity database registering specificity data having a set

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of an expression specifying the person created based on an existing document, a type of the person's name or a modification expression and a specificity, and normalizes the weight average.

20.   (cancelled)

21.   (previously presented) A document anonymity setting method comprising:
a specificity calculating step of extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of specificity at which the expression specifies a name of the person; and
an anonymity setting processing step of rewriting the name of the person with an anonymity expression in said input document which has a specificity higher than a predetermined threshold;
wherein said specificity calculating step extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of intensity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and
said anonymity setting processing step sets, when there is a surrounding expressions of a degree of specificity higher then a predetermined threshold, anonymity for said surrounding expression and the person's name; and
further comprising an anonymity setting indicating step of setting and changing a threshold to be used at the anonymity setting processing step.

22.   (previously presented) A document anonymity setting method comprising:
a specificity calculating step of extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of specificity at which the expression specifies a name of the person; and
an anonymity setting processing step of rewriting the name of the person with an anonymity expression in said input document which has a specificity higher than a predetermined threshold;
wherein said specificity calculating step extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of intensity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

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said anonymity setting processing step sets, when there is a surrounding expressions of a degree of specificity higher then a predetermined threshold, anonymity for said surrounding expression and the person's name; and

wherein the anonymity setting method retains, in a threshold database, a threshold used in an anonymity setting processing for each processing document and sets a last threshold as a default during the anonymity setting processing of a new input document.

23-25. (cancelled)

26.   (previously presented) A document anonymity setting method comprising:

a specificity calculating step of extracting an expression specifying a person from an input document and calculating a specificity to evaluate a degree of specificity at which the expression specifies a name of the person; and

an anonymity setting processing step of rewriting the name of the person with an anonymity expression in said input document which has a specificity higher than a predetermined threshold;

wherein said specificity calculating step extracts surrounding expressions of the person's name from said input document, and calculates, for each surrounding expression, a degree of specificity for evaluating a degree of intensity at which the person can be specified with the extracted individual surrounding expressions; and

said anonymity setting processing step sets, when there is a surrounding expressions of a degree of specificity higher then a predetermined threshold, anonymity for said surrounding expression and the person's name; and

wherein the anonymity setting processing step replaces the expression specifying the person extracted from an input document with a low specificity expression having a specificity equal to or lower than a threshold which is to be used for rewriting of the expressions specifying a person.

27-31. (cancelled)

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